#### Thai

# ตัวอักษรไทย

Spoken in: Thailand

Total speakers: 46–50 million

Genetic Classification: Tai-Kadai Kam-Tai Be-Tai Tai-Sek Tai Southwestern East Central Chiang

Saeng Thai

Official language of: Thailand

Thai is the official language of Thailand; it is spoken by approximately 50 million people in Thailand, Vietnam, and the Yunnan province of China. It has several dialects. Although most of the words are monosyllables, a number of them are polysyllabic. Because there is no inflection, word order is important for showing grammatical relationships.

The Thai language is also tonal, and the tones serve to distinguish meanings of words otherwise pronounced alike. There are five tones: high, middle, low, rising, and falling. Over the centuries Thai has borrowed many words from Chinese, Khmer, Pali, Sanskrit, and, more recently, from European languages such as French and English.

Currently SSWAHS Health Care Interpreter Service employs 4 Thai sessional interpreters.

## Thai alphabet

### **Consonants**

Consonants are divided into three classes: 1 (green), 2 (red) and 3 (blue), which help to determine the tone of a syllable. The sounds represented by some consonants change when they are used at the end of a syllable (indicated by the letters on the right of the slash below). Some consonants can only be used at the beginning of a syllable.

ก	กไก่	ko kai	chicken	k	ท	ท ทหาร	tho thahan	soldier	th/t
บ	ขไข่	kho khai	egg	kh/k	Ť	5 5/3	tho thong	flag	th/t
ബ	ฃขวด	kho khuad	bottle	kh/k	น	น หนู	no nu	mouse	n
୩	ค ควา	kho khwai	buffalo	kh/k	บ	บใบไม้	bo baimai	leaf	b/p
ନ	ฅ คน	kho khon	person	kh/k	ป	ป ปลา	po pla	fish	р
ଅ	ฆ ระฆัง	kho rakhang	bell	kh/k	И	ผผึ้ง	pho phung	bee	ph/p
ง	งงู	ngo ngu	snake	ng	ฝ	ฝฝา	fo fa	wall	f/p
จ	จ จาน	cho chan	plate	ch/t	W	พ พาน	pho phan	a kind of tray	ph/p
ฉ	ฉฉิ่ง	cho ching	cymbal	ch/t	ฟ	ฟ ฟัน	fo fan	teeth	f/p
บ	ชช้าง	cho chang	elephant	ch/t	ภ	ภสำเภา	pho sampao	sailboat	ph/p
ซ	ซโซ่	so so	chain	s/t	ม	มม้า	mo ma	horse	m
ฌ	ល លេខ	cho choe	bush	ch/t	ប	ยยักษ์	yo yak	ogre	у
្ជា	ល្អ หญิง	yo ying	woman	y/n	ን	ร เรือ	ro rua	rowing boat	r/n
Ŋ	ฎชฎา	do chada	headdress	d/t	ล	ลลิง	lo ling	monkey	I/n
Ŋ	ฏ ปฏัก	to patak	goad	t	ว	ว แหวน	wo waen	ring	W
ন্ত্	ฐ ฐาน	tho sunthan	base	th/t	ମ	ศ ศาลา	so sala	pavilion	s/t
ଶ୍ୟ	ฑมณโฑ	tho namgmontho	dancer	th	Jф	ษฤาษี	so rusi	hermit	s/t
ଷ୍ୟ	യ പ്ല്യാറ	tho phuthao	old person	th/t	র্	ส เสือ	so sua	tiger	s/t
ณ	ณเณร	no nen	novice monk	n	ห	หหืบ	ho hip	chest	h
ଡା	ด เด็ก	do dek	child	d/t	ฟ	ฬ จุฬา	lo chula	kite	I/n
ଡା	ต เต่า	to tao	turtle	t	อ	อ อ่าง	o ang	basin	(silent)
ถ	ถฤง	tho thung	sack	th/t	ជ	ฮ นกฮูก	ho nokhuk	owl	h

The consonants in the final row are compounds used as alternatives to the basic consonants.

## **Vowel diacritics**

